

SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES*

INTRODUCTION

COLCHESTER ENGLISH STUDY CENTRE (CESC) and INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE HOLIDAYS (ILH) fully recognise their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children and young people in their care. This responsibility encompasses the following principles:

- The welfare of the child/young person is paramount
- To protect children/young people from harm (maltreatment)
- All children/young people without exception have the right to protection from abuse regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or beliefs
- The policy applies to all staff and other adults involved with CESC and ILH, including: Group Leaders, external contractors, Homestay providers
- All concerns and allegations of abuse will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately
- Commitment to safer recruitment, selection and vetting
- To ensure consistency between all policies and procedures relating to the safety and welfare of children and young people within our care
- To review all policies and procedures relating to child welfare and safety on an annual basis

CESC and ILH address their commitment to these principles through:

Prevention - ensuring all reasonable measures are taken to minimise the risk of harm to children's welfare. These include:

- Ensuring safer recruitment practice*
- Ensuring through training that all staff are aware of and committed to the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures
- Establishing a positive, supportive and secure environment in which children can learn and develop, together with an ethos which promotes in all students a sense of being valued, listened to and respected
- Providing pastoral support that is accessible and available to all children and young people and ensuring that all course attendees know to whom they can talk about their concerns.

(* refer to separate policies and guidance for full details; this guidance will follow the British Council recommendations and comply with guidance with regard to the DBS Disclosure &

Barring Service]. All employees have references checked and undergo a full enhanced DBS check).

Protection – ensuring all appropriate actions are taken to address concerns about the welfare of a child or children, working to agreed local policies and procedures in full partnership with other local agencies especially the Police and Children's Social Care (Safeguarding Children Joint Chief Inspectors' Report Department of Health ,October 2002).

These include:

- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know and involving children and their parents/guardians appropriately
- Monitoring children known or thought to be at risk of harm and to contribute to assessments of need and support packages for those children.

Safeguarding, in addition to child protection, encompasses issues such as student health and safety, bullying/cyber - bullying, appropriate medical provision, drugs and substance misuse. These have specific policies and guidance which should be read in conjunction with this document.

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

What is Child Protection?

Child Protection is a very important aspect of safeguarding. It refers to activity which is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm.

What is significant harm?

The Children's Act 1989 introduced the concept of significant harm as the threshold that justifies compulsory intervention by statutory agencies in family life in the best interests of children. There are no absolute criteria on which to rely when judging what constitutes significant harm. Sometimes it might be a single traumatic event but more often it is an accumulation of significant events which damage the child's physical and psychological development. Decisions about significant harm are complex and require discussion with the statutory agencies.

Scope and Purpose of these Procedures

These procedures apply to Managers, all staff (including Group Leaders, agents and external contractors) working for and on behalf of CESC and ILH and explain what action should be taken if there are concerns that a child is or might be suffering harm. A child is a person under 18 years but the principles of these procedures apply also to vulnerable young adults over 18 years.

The procedures are available to parents on request or via the CESC and ilh websites.

Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

All staff including Group Leaders, agents and external contractors have a statutory obligation to report to the Designated Child Protection Person (DCPP) if there is suspicion of abuse of a student or if a student discloses abuse or allegations of abuse.

This is an unavoidable, individual and professional responsibility of all staff for the protection of children from harm.

Staff could have their suspicion or concern raised in a number of ways, the most likely of which are:

- the conduct of a member of staff
- a child, parent or member of staff ‘disclosing’ abuse
- evidence of physical hurt that may or may not be accompanied by
- unusual or uncharacteristic behaviour by a student

The following individuals have specific roles and responsibilities under Child Protection Procedures that are outlined below:

Maria Walters – Student Welfare and Accommodation Officer - is the **Designated Child Protection Person (DCPP) for CESC and ILH**. Maria ensures that the Annual Review of the policy and procedures is carried out and brings the findings and reports to the Management Team. She is also responsible for ensuring the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures are compliant with all British Council regulations and UK law and are known by all CESC and ilh stakeholders.

Francesca Ambrosini-Spaul – Accommodation & Marketing Officer – is the **Deputy DCPP**.

A Responsible Child Protection Person at each Summer Centre location will be appointed by the Head of Summer Centres. Each nominated person will have successfully undertaken Safeguarding level 2 training.

The day-to-day management of Health and Safety matters at CESC will be the responsibility of the Principal. At ILH Centres, it is the responsibility of the Centre Manager.

DCPP responsibilities

Raising Awareness:

- to monitor and review annually, liaising with the Management Team , the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures to ensure that they comply with current best practice
- to ensure parents have access to the Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures which alert them to the fact that referrals may be made and explain the role of CESC and ILH in this to try to avoid later conflict. This policy is available on the CESC and ILH websites and a hard copy is provided on request.
- to ensure, where necessary, relevant records are passed on to the receiving language school if a student transfers.

Training and Support:

- to ensure that all staff have undertaken Basic Safeguarding Awareness Foundation training (Level 1) and undertake regular updates (Level I) every 12 months as a minimum
- nominated staff on each campus to have successfully undertaken Safeguarding Level 2 training
- to manage and deliver in-house Child Protection training for all staff, every year and keep records of training. This is a minimum requirement, and any new legislation or updates will be communicated with staff
- to ensure all new staff and Group Leaders receive induction on Child Protection Procedures
- to encourage Group Leaders to undertake level 1 Child Protection training and to gain an English qualification
- to ensure that all staff and homestay providers are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.
- staff to have sound knowledge of the different forms of abuse and a clear understanding of the possible physical and behavioural indicators and know when it is appropriate to make a referral to the DCPP
- staff to inform the DCPP of all cases of actual or suspected abuse. The only exception to this would be if the DCPP was implicated in the concerns, in which case the Management Team would be informed
- to ensure that in all cases of actual or alleged harm to a pupil, the Essex and Suffolk Child Protection Procedures are followed
- to act as a focal point for liaison with Children’s Social Care and other authorised agencies, ensuring that appropriate information is available at the time of referral and that the referral is confirmed in writing under confidential cover
- to act as a source of support, advice and expertise within CESC and ILH on matters of Child Protection and welfare

- ensure that clear, detailed written records of welfare concerns about students are kept secure and confidential
- CESC and ILH will not investigate allegations of abuse by staff members but instead refer to LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer).

We will report all disclosures that are received. We do not have any threshold for referrals. We always direct all allegations to the DCP.

Confidential Reporting ('Whistleblowing'- Staff Allegations)

All staff should be aware of their duty to raise concerns, where they exist, about the management of Child Protection, which may include the attitude or actions of colleagues. If the member of staff reporting suspicions remains unsatisfied by a decision not to act by the DCP or the Management Team, he or she may, in the first instance, report to Brian Cooke who is CESC's designated Whistleblowing Officer. If this fails, then as a responsible citizen, he or she may report concerns directly to Children's Social Care (see **Procedures to follow**). He or she will be considered to have acted as a responsible citizen and will not be held accountable for undermining a school decision.

What constitutes child abuse?

'A child is considered to be abused or at risk of abuse when the basic needs of the child are not being met through acts of either commission or omission, leading to demonstrable harm or demonstrable likely harm'. NSPCC 1987 (adapted)

It is generally accepted that there are four main forms of abuse which are not mutually exclusive. The following definitions are based on those from Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2010).

i) Neglect

Neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may include failing to provide the basic necessities of life: adequate food, clothing, warmth and shelter; failure to ensure adequate supervision including the use of adequate care-takers; or the failure to ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs.

ii) Physical Abuse

Physical abuse involves physical injury to a child, where there is definite knowledge or reasonable suspicion that injury was deliberately inflicted or was not prevented. It may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child.

It also involves giving a child poisonous substances, inappropriate drugs and alcohol. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child. Physical abuse, as well as being a result of an act of commission, can also be caused through omission or the failure to protect, as well as forced marriages and female genital mutilation.

iii) Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse involves actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child or adolescent. It involves forcing or enticing a child or young person (including abuse of trust (Sexual Offences Act 2003 amended in 2007 sections 3 and 5)) to take part in sexual activities, including prostitution, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including penetrative or non-penetrative acts. They may include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, pornographic material or watching sexual activities, or encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways.

iv) Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is the persistent emotional ill-treatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child's emotional and psychological development. It may involve conveying to children that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond the child's developmental capability, as well as overprotection and limitation of exploring and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (e.g. in domestic violence). It may involve causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger.

Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of ill-treatment of a child, though it may occur alone. Serious bullying may be regarded as emotional, sexual or physical abuse and will be considered under Child Protection Procedures.

Indications or Signs of Possible Abuse:

- Signs of looking unwashed, undernourished, weight loss etc.; inappropriate clothing for the conditions
- Changes in behaviour – depression or withdrawn behaviour or attention seeking behaviour
- Fearful behaviour - fear of specific people places, fear of separation etc.
- Mentioning being left alone or unsupervised
- Regressive or aggressive behaviour e.g. bed-wetting or severe temper outbursts that are out of character

- Persistent or multiple bruising in unexpected places, that cannot be explained by normal childhood activity
- Minor injuries in unlikely places
- Burns, scalds or bites
- Delay in seeking access to medical care/treatment
- Excessive preoccupation with sexual matters
- Knowledge of sexual matters inappropriate for age of child
- Promiscuous behaviour
- Sexually explicit or otherwise disturbing creative writing or artwork.

There may be other circumstances, not amounting to abuse, which give cause for serious concern about the welfare of students. Questions of the child or young person being in moral danger, being uncared for, engaging in anti-social or inappropriate behaviour and so on may be referred to the Heads of Summer Centres or Principal, who will discuss the matter with the DCP, and as necessary, to Children's Social Care. Such cases may also be referred to the Medical Centre and through them to Children's Social Care. Please refer to CESC/ILH Abusive Policy Procedure for further information.

PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW IF ABUSE IS SUSPECTED

- Staff should complete a **Vulnerable Student Communication Record** and submit to DCP
- DCP will consider if a referral needs to be made to either Essex or Suffolk Authority (see below):

ESSEX: Colchester
Family Operations Hub
0345 603 7627 (free)
0345 606 1212 (out of hours)

SUFFOLK (Ipswich)
Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
Customer First: 0808 800 4005

- If a member of staff does not wish to submit a concern to the DCP, they may go directly to one of the above numbers, as appropriate
- In cases of allegations against staff, the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) should be contacted:
- ESSEX: Colchester
03330 139797 (Mon – Fri)
0845 606 1212 (out of hours)
SUFFOLK (Ipswich)
Ali Hassey: 01473 263122

SAFEGUARDING PROCESS

